

FRANK DEFA was born in the City of Rome, Italy, February 14, 1880, and became a resident of Utah when he was a lad of twelve years. Here his record has been one of exceptionally interesting order and has shown splendid energy and resourcefulness on his part. He is now one of the notably successful ranchers and merchants of Duchesne County, where his fine ranch is situated about midway between the villages of Hanna and Tabiona. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. John Defa, passed their entire lives in Italy, and he himself there received his early education. One of his older brothers preceded him to the United States, and he was twelve years of age at the time of his arrival as a stranger in a strange land. During a period of two years he sold newspapers and polished shoes at the corner of Cleveland and High streets in Salt Lake City, and he then entered upon an apprenticeship to the trade of machinist in railroad shops in that city. At the age of nineteen years he returned to Italy for a visit and was seized by the government to render military service. While in this service he was assigned duty as interpreter in the City of Naples, by reason of his ability to speak several languages, and this service was mainly rendered for the convenience of tourists. At the expiration of his term of military service he had a fund of \$3,000, and decided to tour Europe before returning to the United States. He thus traveled extensively in France, Spain and other countries, besides visiting Constantinople, and fifteen months after receiving his discharge from military service he again arrived in Salt Lake City. In the meanwhile he had spent virtually his entire fund of savings. During the ensuing three years he was again employed in the local railroad shops, and in the meanwhile he was joined by his bride, whom he had wedded while in his native land. Upon the opening to settlement of the former Indian reservation that now included Duchesne County he and his wife came to the new district to seek their fortunes, their total capital at the time having been about \$400. Through his knowledge of the Spanish language he was able to converse in the same with some of the Indians of the locality, and he learned from them that they had for sale a number of wild horses. He consulted with Edward Murdock, a business man of a neighboring settlement, to whom he agreed to deliver such horses at the rate of ten dollars a head. He purchased horses from the Indians at about five dollars each, and during his first year on the former reservation he accumulated about \$2,000 by his operations along this line. He then turned his attention to dealing in cattle and sheep. Each fall he would buy both ewes and lambs, and early in the spring he would shear

*Utah - Storied Domain CJA Alter Vol III p380  
381*



FRANK DEFA

over →



the ewes and sell them for summer ranging. As the country developed and attracted new settlers, Mr. Defa opened a general store and gas station, later a garage and a restaurant, and still later the finest dance hall and theater in this part of the state. He has, in fact, built a village of his own. A splendid mountain stream affords power for the operation of his private electric plant, which lights his village, besides supplying frigidaire power and other modern power facilities. Mr. Defa owns and operates a fine ranch of 400 acres and on the same breeds pure-blood Cottswold sheep, his flock of 200 such sheep at the present time being of the finest type, and there being constant local demand on the part of sheep men in this section for his high-grade Cottswold bucks.

It was in the year 1905 that Mr. Defa came to the former Indian reservation and became a pioneer homesteader in what is now Duchesne County, as one of the first settlers. The United States soldiers were just leaving the reservation at the time of his arrival. About this time a man named Stockmore was granted a tract of 320 acres not far from the Defa homestead and proceeded to lay out a townsite and sell lots. This undertaking brought many prospective settlers into the district, and as this was prior to the national prohibition era Mr. Defa opened a saloon in a tent and developed a prosperous business.

In Italy was solemnized the marriage of Mr. Defa to Miss Mary Paraco, and they have five children: Joseph, Leo, Alphonso, Rosa and Theresa. The family home is one of attractive order and is known for its generous hospitality and good cheer.



FRANK DEFA